STRANGE GALAXY

FEBRUARY
1971
50¢

FEATURING:
A TERROR TRIP INTO
THE UNKNOWN

THE STRANGE BATTLE WITH
SPACE MONSTERS

LUNAR HORROR WHEN
THE MOON IS RED

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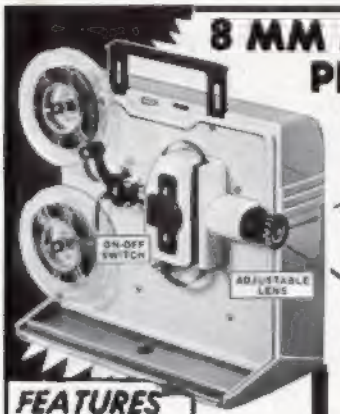

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STRANGE GALAXY

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CARL BURGOS, Editor IRVING FASS, Art Director
EZRA JACKSON, Art Editor

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the UNKNOWN

YESTERDAY, WE STEPPED ON THE MOON, TODAY THE PLANETS IN OUR GALAXY HAVE BEEN MEASURED, PHOTOGRAPHED AND RECORDED BY UNMANNED SPACECRAFT. TOMORROW WE WILL JOURNEY INTO THE STRANGE BLACK VOID TO VERIFY 'THEORY' AND MAKE IT A FACT! THAT WAS THE MISSION OF X-17,-THE FLIGHT IS RECORDED AS A CLASSIC, INCREDIBLE HORROR, OF A "SPACE-VISION WARP" THAT STUNNED THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD!

THE LAUNCHING CEREMONY BEGAN! THE BATTERY OF LOUDSPEAKERS DRONED OVER THE HUSHED CROWD OF GATHERED NOTABLES...

THE FIRST SPACE SHIP CAPABLE OF REACHING OTHER PLANETS IS READY FOR ITS PERILOUS JOURNEY! IN A FEW MOMENTS, A BUTTON WILL BE PUSHED! WORLD WILL CONTACT WORLD! THE UNIVERSE WILL SHRINK... AND MAN WILL BE ITS SHRINKER...

ALL THE YEARS OF RESEARCH...ALL OF THE EXPERIMENTS AND THEORY AND TRIAL AND ERROR WERE ALMOST OVER...

AS THE X-17, WITH ITS HAND-PICKED CREW, HURTLES THROUGH SPACE TO ITS DESTINATION, EVERY INCH OF ITS TRIP WILL BE RECORDED HERE ON EARTH! EVERY EXPERIENCE OF THE MEN WITHIN HER ALLOY SHELL WILL BE NOTED DOWN! WE WILL BE IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION...

THE LOUDSPEAKERS DRONED ON! THE GENERAL TURNED TO THE CREW MEMBERS... McGRAW... HOLLIS... ENKERS... DANTON...

EVERY PRECAUTION HAS BEEN TAKEN FOR YOUR SAFETY! EVERY SCIENTIFIC DEVICE... EVERY COMFORT KNOWN TO MAN HAS BEEN PLACED AT YOUR DISPOSAL! YOU WILL BE SAFE!

THE GENERAL LIFTED THE CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE...

TODAY, YOU STAND AS COLUMBUS STOOD OVER 450 YEARS AGO... ON THE BRINK OF THE UNKNOWN! MAY YOU MAKE AS STUPENDOUS AND EXCITING A DISCOVERY AS HE MADE IN HIS DAY! I HEREBY LAUNCH THE FIRST PLANET-BOUND ROCKET... THE X-17...

MOMENTS LATER, WITHIN THE X-17, FOUR MEN LAY IN THEIR SHOCK-COUCHES... AWAITING THEIR DESTINY...

READY, CAPTAIN McGRAW?

READY, SIR!

A FINGER MOVED... BUTTONS CLICKED...

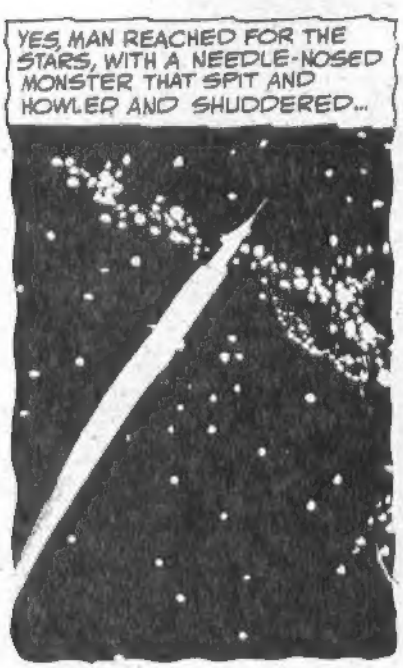
SAFETY

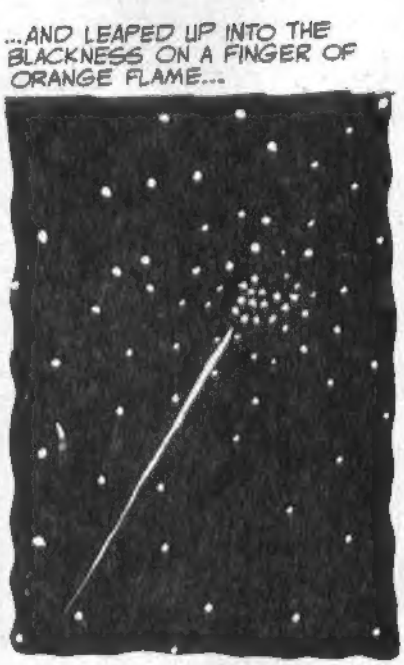
READY

RELEASE

FIRE

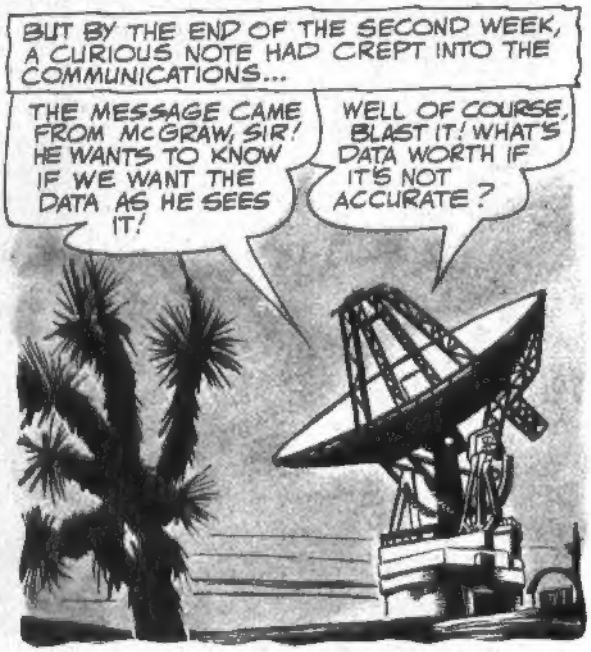
AND MAN REACHED FOR THE STARS WITH AN EAR-SPLITTING ROAR...


YES, MAN REACHED FOR THE STARS, WITH A NEEDLE-NOSED MONSTER THAT SPIT AND HOWLED AND SHUDDERED...


...AND LEAPED UP INTO THE BLACKNESS ON A FINGER OF ORANGE FLAME...

IT... IT'S OUT OF SIGHT! MAY GOD BE WITH THEM! THEY ARE IN HIS HANDS NOW!

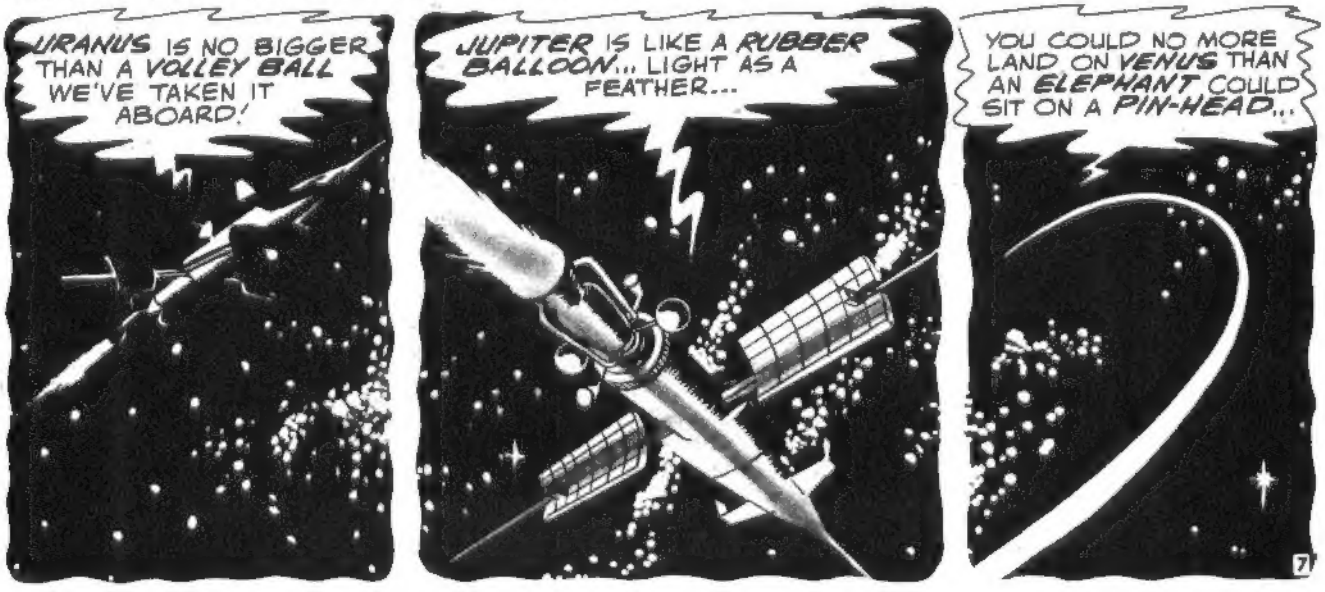
FOR THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF THE PIONEER SPACE VOYAGE, THE REPORTS CAME IN AS EXPECTED...
THIS IS McGRAW OF THE X-17! EVERYTHING IS PROCEEDING ACCORDING TO PLAN! SHIP IS PERFORMING BEAUTIFULLY! YOU'RE COMING THROUGH TO US CLEARLY! HOW DO YOU HEAR US?
WE HEAR YOU FINE, McGRAW!

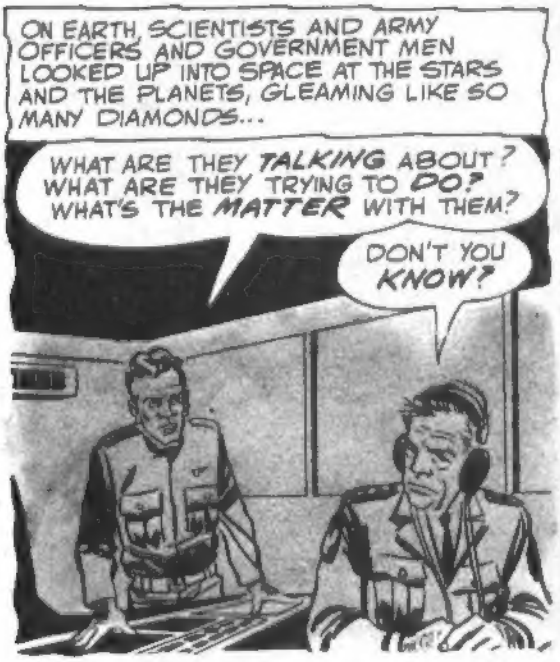

BUT BY THE END OF THE SECOND WEEK, A CURIOUS NOTE HAD CREPT INTO THE COMMUNICATIONS...
THE MESSAGE CAME FROM McGRAW, SIR! HE WANTS TO KNOW IF WE WANT THE DATA AS HE SEES IT!
WELL OF COURSE, BLAST IT! WHAT'S DATA WORTH IF IT'S NOT ACCURATE?

AND BY THE END OF THE THIRD WEEK...
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, SIR! THE X-17 IS MAKING GOOD HEADING! AND YET... THE DATA... THESE REPORTS...
WELL!? WHAT ABOUT THESE REPORTS?

SIR! IF THESE REPORTS ARE CORRECT... IF WE ARE TO BELIEVE THESE REPORTS... THEN OUR ENTIRE CONCEPT OF THE UNIVERSE HAS TO BE REVISED!

ACROSS THE COLD VOID CRACKLED THE ELECTRIC HUM OF HUMAN CONVERSATION AS A LONE SPACE SHIP TRAILED A ZIG-ZAG COURSE THROUGH BLACK EMPTY SPACE... REPORTS THAT MOCKED MAN'S KNOWLEDGE... DATA THAT LAUGHED AT SCIENCE...




ON EARTH, SCIENTISTS AND ARMY OFFICERS AND GOVERNMENT MEN LOOKED UP INTO SPACE AT THE STARS AND THE PLANETS, GLEAMING LIKE SO MANY DIAMONDS...
WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT? WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO DO? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THEM?
DON'T YOU KNOW?

WHILE OUT IN SPACE, THE X-17 ROAMED AIMLESSLY THROUGH THE VOID...
SOME OF THE CREW ARE HAVING A GAME OF CATCH WITH MERCURY!

OTHERS ARE PLAYING RING-TOSS WITH SATURN'S RINGS!

WE GAVE THEM EVERY SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT KNOWN TO MAN! WE TRAINED THEM... TESTED THEM... PROVED TO OURSELVES THEY WERE CAPABLE MEN! THAT WE COULD COUNT ON THEM!
BUT WHAT WE HADN'T COUNTED ON WAS SPACE!

THE STARS! LOOK AT THE STARS! THEY'RE NOTHING BUT MARBLES! BRIGHT SHINY MARBLES!
C'MON! LET'S PLAY MARBLES!

WE HADN'T COUNTED ON THE EFFECT OF SPACE ON MAN'S MIND! THE MENTAL CHANGES THAT WOULD OCCUR WHEN MAN WAS SUBJECTED TO SPACE TRAVEL!
...THE X-17 HAS BEEN CAUGHT IN A SPACE-VISION WARP THAT HAS REDUCED THE SIZE OF STARS AND PLANETS TO MINATURE SIZE!

THIS IS McGRAW... ON THE X-17! YOU SHOULD BE WITH US NOW! HA, HA! WHAT A TIME WE'RE HAVING! I'M THROUGH CALLING BACK REPORTS! I'M GOING TO JOIN THE OTHERS! WE HAVE THE UNIVERSE IN OUR HANDS! HA, HA! HEY, FELLAS! WAIT FOR ME!

YES! THE X-17 IS MANNED BY A CREW... DRIVEN INSANE... DESTINED TO FLOAT IN SPACE FOREVER!
H-H-HEY, FELLAS! I... I C-CAN'T PLAY ANYMORE! W-WE'RE LOST! --LOST IN THE UNKNOWN!

THE END

FROM THE EARLIEST DAWN OF MANKIND THERE WERE "GLORY HUNTERS" AND WHEN MAN MOVED INTO SPACE HE CARRIED THIS DISEASE WITH HIM. SUCH WAS THE CASE OF ONE SPACE COMMANDER WHO TRIED TO FIND A SCIENTIST WHO VANISHED IN GALAXY 4 AND MARKED AS "DEAD" BY THE EARTH'S TRIBUNAL OF SPACE...

PLANET OF HORROR

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

IT WAS COMING NOW, AND THORD STEELE COULD HEAR IT...COULD SEE THE HULL GLINTING CLOSER...

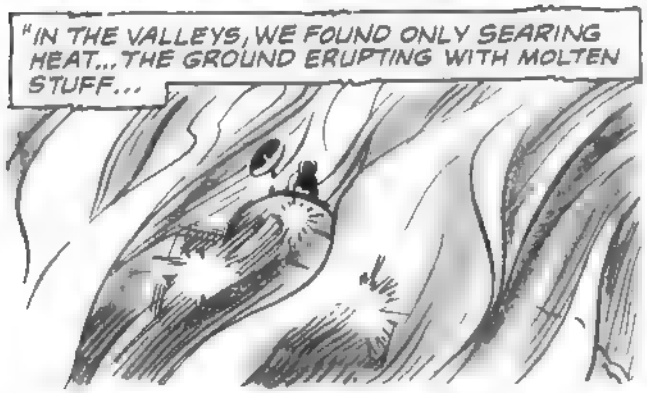
A SECOND LATER, THE LAND CAR WAS CAREENING INTO THE CAMP CLEARING...

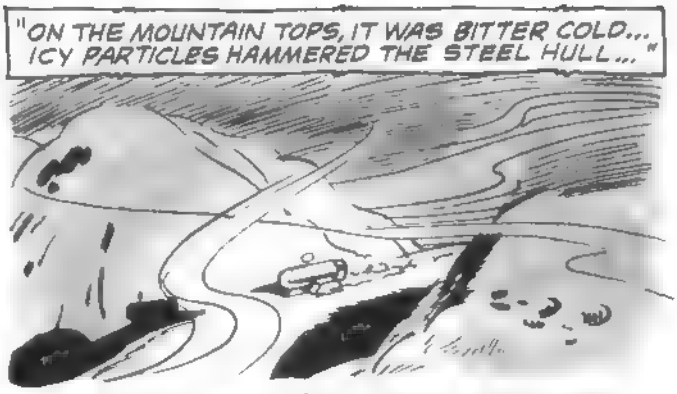
THERE WERE SHOUTS OF GREETING FROM THE RECEPTION PARTY, BUT THEY RECEIVED ONLY SILENCE IN RETURN...

ENERGY RAYS FROM THE VITALIZERS GLEAMED DOWN ON THE WEARY MEN OF THE SCOUTING PARTY! WHEN THEIR REACTIONS RECORDED NORMALCY THORD STEELE BROUGHT THE GROUP TO THE INTERROGATION ROOM...
THE QUESTIONING STARTED...
YOU'VE BEEN GONE TWENTY EIGHT DAYS, AND BY THE LOOKS OF THINGS, I'D SAY YOU FOUND SOMETHING, LIEUTENANT GANLON!
TRUE ENOUGH, SIR-- BUT NOT A TRACE OF DOCTOR TERROD AND, I'M AFRAID NOTHING OF WHAT YOU HAD EXPECTED TO FIND HERE!
LT. GANLON'S EYES FIXED THEMSELVES HARD ON THE BRIDGE OF STEELE'S NOSE, AS HE BEGAN HIS STORY...
WE WENT THROUGH A BELT OF JUNGLE, ABOUT TEN MILES WIDE, I'D SAY... JUNGLE QUITE SIMILAR TO THAT ON EARTH, SIR...
"AT FIRST, THE GOING WAS EASY-- BUT AS THE JUNGLE GREW THICKER, THE AIR AND GROUND GREW HOTTER..."
BETTER DOUBLE UP THE ACTION OF THOSE FRONT CUTTERS... WE'LL NEED 'EM!
WHEW! GETTING HOT!
CRUNCH
CRACK
"THE NEXT DAY, OUR OBSERVER NOTICED A COLUMN OF SMOKE..."
APPROACH WITH CAUTION... MAY BE RADIOACTIVE!
"EXCITEMENT RAN HIGH THROUGH THE CREW, BECAUSE SMOKE MEANS FIRE AND FIRE USUALLY MEANS SOME KIND OF INTELLIGENCE..."
SAY! THE TEMPERATURE'S SHOOTING UP... FAST!
THE TERRAIN... IT--IT'S MOVING, AND-- LOOK!
"SUDDENLY THERE WAS A CRACKING NOISE AND FLAME!
THERE'S THE CAUSE OF THE SMOKE! WOW!
BAROOOOOOM!

"BLEAK, BARREN HILLS... FEW SIGNS OF LIFE, AS WE CONTINUED INLAND..."
JUST LIKE EARTH, MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO!
SOME SORT OF LAKE AHEAD! MAYBE WE'LL FIND SOME CAMP REMAINS THERE, SIR!

"BUT THE LAKE WAS A BOILING MASS...TENTACLED CREATURES THRIVED IN IT-- BUT NO SIGN OF ANY CAMP THERE..."


"IN THE VALLEYS, WE FOUND ONLY SEARING HEAT...THE GROUND ERUPTING WITH MOLTEN STUFF..."


"ON THE MOUNTAIN TOPS, IT WAS BITTER COLD... ICY PARTICLES HAMMERED THE STEEL HULL..."

"WE'D BEEN THREE WEEKS OUT, WHEN ONE OF THE PARTY DISCOVERED THE FOOTPRINTS..."
THEY'RE FRESH! MUST'VE SEEN US ARRIVE...
MAY BE INTELLIGENT CREATURES! WE'LL FOLLOW THEM!

"FOR SEVERAL MILES WE TRAILED THE THEN WE SAW THE MOUNDS AND THE STRANGE, MOVING SHADOWS..."

"AFOOT ONCE AGAIN, WE ADVANCED CLOSER TO THE ODD MOUNDS..."
SOMETHING COMING, MEN! KEEP YOUR RIFLES READY...
THERE'S ONE NOW... GOOD HEAVENS... LOOK!

"THE SHADOWS I HAD SEEN A FEW MINUTES EARLIER WERE ALIVE NOW... GRUNTING SHAPES MOVING TOWARD US...
UNNGGGHHHAAAGGGHHH

"OUR RAY RIFLES BLASTED A FEW OF THEM..."
KEEP MOVING! HEAD FOR THE CAR...
ZIZ ZIZ ZIZ
"AS WE TRAVELED FURTHER INLAND, THE SWAMP BECAME THICKER AND TREACHEROUS..."
THERE'S NO SENSE GOING ANY FARTHER! TURN AROUND AND HEAD BACK TO THE ROCKET!
RIGHT, LIEUTENANT GANLON!
"AS WE RAN, THEY HURLED BOULDERS AT US AS IF THEY WERE PEBBLES!"
DON'T STOP TO SHOOT! KEEP GOING!
CRASH
"TECHNICIAN BECK HAD HESITATED AN INSTANT TOO LONG, AND AS WE SCRAMBLED INTO THE LAND CAR..."
IF WE TRY TO SAVE HIM, WE'LL ALL GET CAUGHT!
YAAAHHH!

THE MEMBERS OF THE ADVANCE PARTY WERE NODDING THEIR HEADS, AS LIEUTENANT GANLON FINISHED HIS TALE...
THIS PLANET IS USELESS FOR EXPLOITATION, MAJOR STEELE, AND BESIDES, DR. TERROD AND HIS GROUP MUST HAVE DIED HERE!
THE HARD LINES OF SUSPICIAN WERE ETCHED DEEPLY IN THORD STEELE'S FACE AS HE NODDED!
VERY INTERESTING, LIEUTENANT! YOU ALL MAY LEAVE NOW... ER... JUST LEAVE YOUR HELMETS HERE! THAT'LL BE ALL!

ALONE IN THE INTERROGATION ROOM, STEELE WAS THINKING DEEPLY...THEN HE WAS FINGERING THE CRASH HELMETS THAT HAD BEEN WORN BY THE ADVANCE PARTY...

FROM A SMALL, INCONSPICUOUS COMPARTMENT, CLEVERLY CONCEALED INSIDE THE HELMETS, HE REMOVED A TINY METAL OBJECT...

SO THAT'S THEIR STORY-- BUT THIS MICRO-CAMERA WILL TELL ME THE *REAL* ONE!

MINUTES LATER, HE WAS RUNNING THE FILM OFF ON A SPECIAL PROJECTOR...

THERE'S THE PILOT AND GANLON... THIS WAS AS THEY STARTED OFF! NOW, I SHALL SEE...

CLIK

INSTEAD OF WILD AND PRIMITIVE JUNGLE, STEELE WAS CHUCKLING AS HE NOTED THE LUSH PARADISE...

THE TELE-FILM RECORDED EVEN THEIR VOICES, AS THEY HAD HALTED TO TEST A ROCKY OUTCROP FOR MINERAL CONTENT!

THE REGISTER NEEDLES ARE JUMPING LIKE CRAZY, LIEUTENANT!

AND STILL ANOTHER SPOT, TAME ANIMALS GRAZED PEACEFULLY BESIDE A CLEAR STREAM...

THERE MUST BE INTELLIGENT LIFE HERE SOMEWHERE!

SAY, LT. GANLON-- LOOK HERE...

ONE OF THE PARTY WAS POINTING TO THE GROUND EXCITEDLY...

FOOTPRINTS! AND THEY LOOK LIKE THEY'VE BEEN MADE BY A MAN!

AND LOOK! A TRAIL... IT MUST LEAD SOMEWHERE!

THEY FOLLOWED THE TRAIL FOR SEVERAL MILES, BUT AT THE END OF IT...
ANY OF YOU KNOW HIM?
CAREFUL, SIR-- THEY DON'T LOOK SO FRIENDLY!
HO, THERE! WE'RE MEMBERS OF AN EXPEDITION SEARCHING FOR DOCTOR TERROD!
SUDDENLY, PARALYZING RAYS WERE ZAPPING AT THEM...
YOUR LEADER! BRING US TO HIM! WE...AAHHH!
THE LEADER COMES NOW!
ANY STRUGGLE YOU MAKE WILL ONLY BE HARDER ON YOU...OTHERWISE, THE PARALYZING RAYS ARE QUITE HARMLESS!
SO YOU'RE THE LEADER! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF... YOU!
A VERY FAMILIAR FACE WAS CLOSE TO GANLON'S...
I SEE YOU RECOGNIZE ME...YES, I'M DOCTOR TERROD, AND I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING TO YOU FULLY, AS WE GO TO THE LABORATORY...
AND WHILE THEY MARCHED THROUGH THE CITY...
OUR CITY, GENTLEMEN... IT TOOK TWENTY-THREE YEARS TO BUILD IT!
THEY WERE SHOWN THE WONDERS OF DOCTOR TERROD'S DEVELOPMENT...
THE PEOPLE WHO AT SIXTY YEARS LOOKED LIKE TEEN AGERS...
THE HYDRONPONIC GARDENS...
THE INDUSTRIAL PLANTS, WHERE MINERALS WERE PROCESSED FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL...

A GLASSITE TUBE SYSTEM TOOK THEM UNDERGROUND...
NOW YOU SHALL SEE ONE OF MY GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS!
BUT WHY BRING US HERE? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH US?
I ASSURE YOU NO HARM, LIEUTENANT, BUT CERTAIN PRECAUTIONS MUST BE TAKEN!
GREAT CYBERNONS HUMMED, BLOTTING OUT THE MEMORY OF WHAT HAD BEEN SEEN; REPLACING IT WITH OTHER FACTS...
GANLON AND HIS MEN WERE PLACED INSIDE HUGE GLASSINE TUBES! DR. TERROD'S VOICE WAS ORDERING THE OPERATIONS STARTED...

HMMMMMM
SWAMP-MUCK-MONSTERS...
BLEAK--BARREN--LAND...
YOU WERE ATTACKED BY...
LAND OGRES... CAR SMASHED...
HMMMM
AFTER THE THOUGHT CONDITIONING HAD BEEN COMPLETED, TERROD'S MEN ATTENDED TO THE LAND CAR...
SORRY TO REPORT, SIR... THE PROCESS DIDN'T TAKE EFFECT ON THE ONE CALLED BECK!
And NOW, AS THE LAND CAR HEADED BACK TOWARD ITS BASE, THE FILM WAS ALMOST OVER...
SO THAT'S WHAT THEY REALLY FOUND!
TERROD'S WEAPONS ARE NO MATCH FOR THE ONES I'VE BROUGHT ALONG! I'LL PUSH ON INTO THE CITY WITH AN ARMED FORCE AT ONCE! ZURON SHALL BE MINE!

THOUGHTS AND PLANS BEGAN TO CROWD INTO THORD STEELE'S ACTIVE BRAIN AS HE ISSUED ORDERS...

CREAK!

HAVE ALL HANDS STAND BY, CAPTAIN BLACK... I HAVE AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR EVERYONE!

THE VIDEO WENT DEAD SUDDENLY AND STEELE WAS WHIRLING TOWARD A FIGURE AT THE OPEN PORT...

TERROD! WHAT THE DEVIL'RE YOU DOING HERE? I..

I WAS AFRAID SOMETHING LIKE THIS WOULD HAPPEN, THAT YOU WOULD CHECK GANLON'S STORY...

INSTANTLY, A BRIGHT BLUE FLASH OF FLAME...

NO, TERROD... NOT THAT! I'LL GO... I'LL...

BUZZZ

SORRY, STEELE... THE ONLY WAY TO STOP YOU!

AFTER DESTROYING THE FILMS TERROD SNAPPED ON THE EMERGENCY POWER...

AS I STARTED TO SAY, OPEN THE ARMORY... DISPOSE OF ALL ARMS! WE'LL NEED THE EXTRA LIGHTNESS FOR TAKE-OFF! CREW TO STATIONS AT ONCE... WE'RE GOING HOME!

VERY GOOD, SIR!

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER, THE GLEAMING METAL TUBE WAS BLASTING UP AND AWAY FROM ZURON...

And AS IT DWINDLED IN THE PURPLING SKY...

I DON'T THINK WE'LL BE BOTHERED AGAIN WITH SEARCH PARTIES FROM EARTH, GENTLEMEN!

BUT WHY DON'T YOU WANT THEM HERE, DOCTOR?

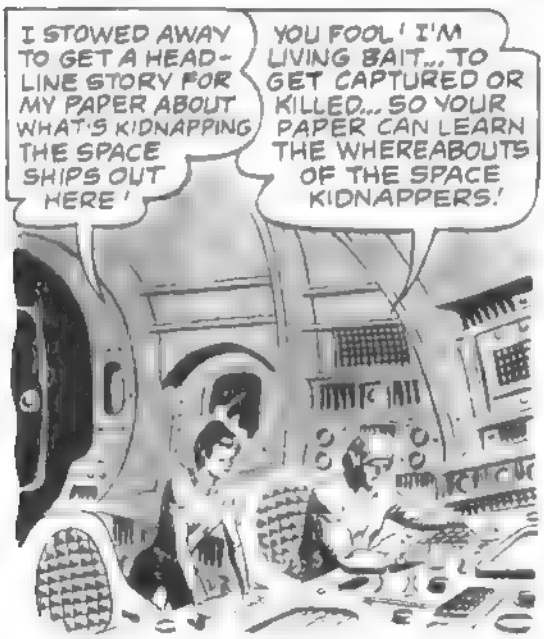
WHY?... THERE ARE TOO MANY THORD STEELES ON EARTH, WHO'D COME HERE TO PLUNDER THIS PARADISE WE'VE FOUND! SOON OURS WOULD BE A DYING PLANET, DEPLETED, RUINED, EMPTY... LET THAT BE THE LAST EXPEDITION!

THE END

SPACE MONSTERS

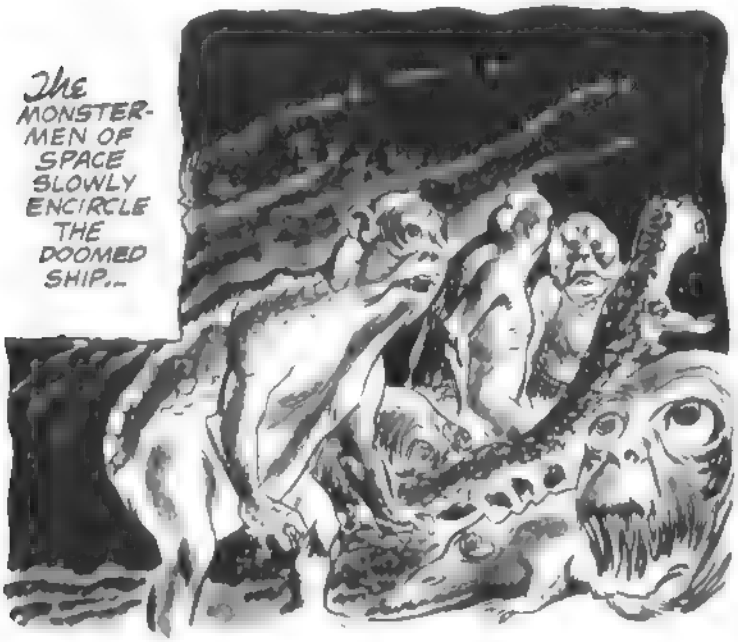
AS INTERGALACTIC TRAVELLERS TRAVERSE THE STARS AN INCREDIBLE MAGNET CREATES AN EERIE AND DESPERATE SITUATION. THE PEACEFUL SPACE LANES BECOME A NIGHTMARE OF TERROR BY THOSE CAUGHT IN THE MAGNETIC FORCE. ONLY TO DISAPPEAR IN THE BLACK VOID WITHOUT A TRACE.

THE COLONIZED GALAXIES CRY OUT FOR AN END THESE OUTRAGES BY THINGS OR BEINGS, UNKNOWN. THE INCREDIBLE "DO OR DIE" MISSION FALLS TO ONE MAN.. CAN HE SUCCEED AGAINST THE MONSTERS OF SPACE?


I STOWED AWAY TO GET A HEADLINE STORY FOR MY PAPER ABOUT WHAT'S KIDNAPPING THE SPACE SHIPS OUT HERE!
YOU FOOL! I'M LIVING BAIT... TO GET CAPTURED OR KILLED... SO YOUR PAPER CAN LEARN THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE SPACE KIDNAPPERS!

SEALED INSTRUMENTS WILL KEEP THE PATROL INFORMED EVERY MINUTE! WHEN THEY BLANK OUT, PATROL WILL KNOW THE DANGER ZONE! THEN... YOUR RADIO WILL BE DEAD!
NO! NO!

LOOK! WE'VE FOUND IT! MY SHIP'S IN THE GRIP OF A GRAVITY BEAM! THOSE THINGS OUT THERE CONTROL IT!
DON! THEY'RE MONSTERS!


THE MONSTER-MEN OF SPACE SLOWLY ENCIRCLE THE DOOMED SHIP...

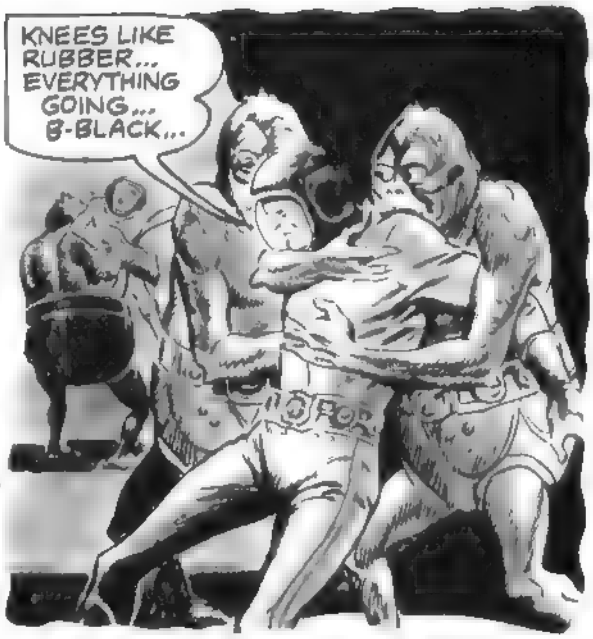
INSIDE THE SHIP...
OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO GO OUT INTO SPACE... FLOAT AROUND UNTIL THE PATROL BATTLESHIPS GET HERE!

DON... IT'S TOO LATE!
THEY'VE CUT A PATH THROUGH THE HULL! IT'S FIGHT OR DIE... HERE AND NOW!

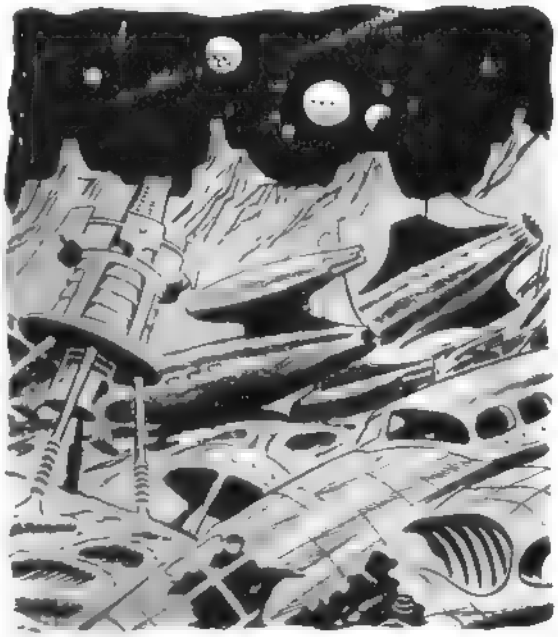
WITH MAEVE'S SCREAM RIPPING AT HIS EARDRUMS, CAPTAIN DON BENTON FIGHTS LIKE A TRAPPED CANAL CAT...

THEY'RE HORRIBLE! LIKE SOME FREAK OF NATURE!
BUT THEY'RE STRONG AS BULLS!

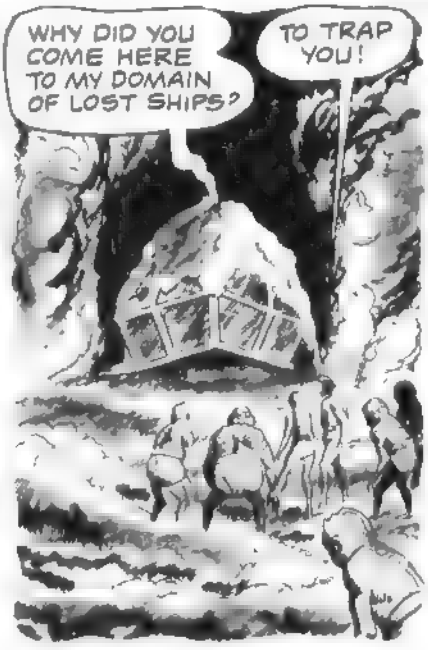
A VICIOUSLY SWUNG HANDMACE CRACKS BENTON'S HELMET! HE STAGGERS...


KNEES LIKE RUBBER... EVERYTHING GOING... B-BLACK...

As DON AND MAEVE ARE BEING OVERCOME BY THE MONSTER-MEN, THEIR TINY FLIER IS TUGGED TOWARD A VAST SEA OF WRECKED SPACE-SHIPS!


Ancient HULKS, SLEEK SPACE SHIPS... STRANGE, TEARDROP SPHERES FROM A DIFFERENT UNIVERSE... ALL THE FLOTSAM AND JETSAM OF DEEP SPACE...

BY A SERIES OF INTERLOCKED GANGPLANKS, BENTON AND MAEVE ARE TAKEN THROUGH THE VAST LABYRINTH OF SHIPS...
YOU COME FACE AMALFA-- GREATEST OF LIVING THINGS!


WHY DID YOU COME HERE TO MY DOMAIN OF LOST SHIPS?
TO TRAP YOU!

ON BENTON'S SHIPS ARE SPECIAL INSTRUMENTS TO WARN THE SPACE PATROL OF YOUR LOCATION, MIGHTY BATTLESHIPS--
MAEVE! YOU'VE TIPPED OUR HAND! THEY'LL SEND OUR SHIP ON WITH AUTOMATIC CONTROLS ON--AND THE PATROLL WILL NEVER KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO US!

DON BENTON STAGGERS... REELS! AN UNSEEN HAND SEEMS TO CLUTCH AT HIS BRAIN...
YOU THINK YOUR FRIEND BETRAYED YOU WILLINGLY, CAPTAIN! AS YOU SEE, I CAN CONTROL YOUR BRAIN, TOO!
MY HEAD!

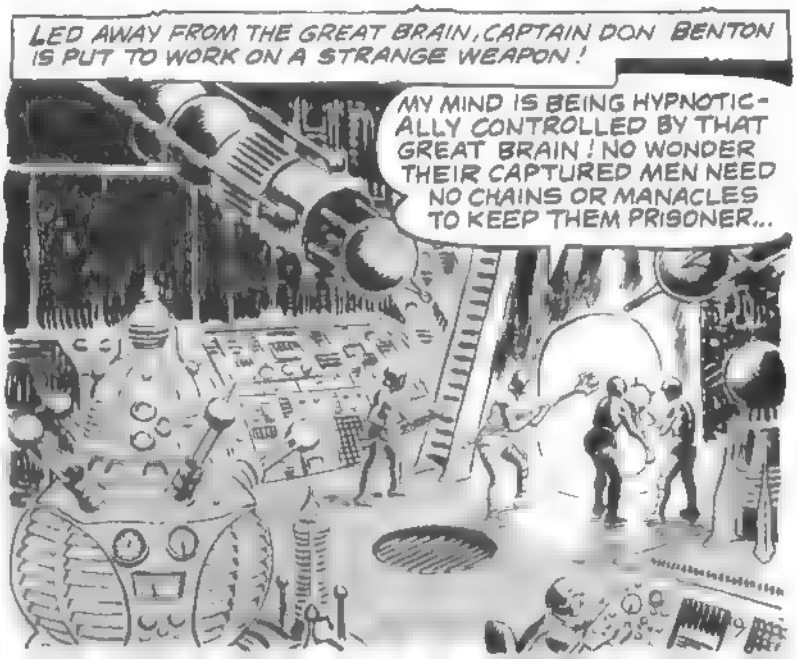
I, AMALFA THE ANCIENT AM THE LAST OF MY RACE! EONS AGO, A WANDERING PLANET CRASHED INTO OUR HOME PLANET, RIPPING ITS ORBIT ABOUT OUR SUN...

"BEFORE THE DISASTER, MY BRAIN WAS REMOVED FROM MY BODY, AND PLACED INSIDE A GIANT DYRATHIS JEWEL..."
ONLY THE GREATEST BRAINS HAVE BEEN SELECTED FOR SURVIVAL! PERHAPS IN CENTURIES TO COME, THESE BRAINS WILL FIND SOME WAY TO RESTORE OUR LOST GLORY!

"ONLY I SURVIVED THE HOLOCAUST! FLOATING IN SPACE, FED BY DRUGS! THE JEWEL IN WHICH I WAS ENCASED CLUNG TO OUR DESTROYED PLANET..."

"GRADUALLY AS THE EONS PASSED, ONE, THEN TWO, THEN HUNDREDS OF PASSING SPACE-SHIPS WERE ATTRACTED TO THE HARD CORE OF THE SMASHED PLANET..."
THIS SHALL BE MY WORLD-- A WORLD OF ALIEN BEINGS FROM ALL THE PLANETS KNOWN TO MEN!

"UNFORTUNATELY, THE ATOMIC RADIATION FROM THESE SHIPS MOTORS AFFECTED THE BIRTHS OF THE PEOPLE ON MY SHIPS TO PRODUCE THE MONSTER-MEN-OF SPACE..."


LED AWAY FROM THE GREAT BRAIN, CAPTAIN DON BENTON IS PUT TO WORK ON A STRANGE WEAPON!
MY MIND IS BEING HYPNOTICALLY CONTROLLED BY THAT GREAT BRAIN! NO WONDER THEIR CAPTURED MEN NEED NO CHAINS OR MANACLES TO KEEP THEM PRISONER...

TIME BECOMES MEANINGLESS AND BENTON LABORS...
NO USE TRYING TO PLAN AN ESCAPE...THE GREAT BRAIN CAN READ MY BRAIN AND STOP IT!
MAEVE WORKS APART FROM BENTON...TURNING OUT HAND BLASTERS...
I'M MAKING HAND-GUNS TO KILL MY OWN PEOPLE, AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT!
And THEN, ONE DAY, BENTON THRUSTS HIS HEAD UNDER A LEAD-SHEATHED HOUSING...
WHY...I'M FREE OF THE BRAIN! THE LEAD HOUSING STOPS THE BRAIN'S ELECTRICAL VIBRATIONS, JUST AS IT PREVENTS ATOMIC RADIATION FROM PASSING THROUGH IT!

IF I CAN MAKE MYSELF A HELMET OF LEAD, I CAN DO JUST WHAT I WANT AROUND HERE! AHH! THAT THIN SHEET OF LEAD... JUST THE THING...
WORKING WITH HIS MELTING BAR, CAPTAIN BENTON TWISTS HIS LEAD SHEET INTO A CRUDE HELMET...
MY NEXT NEED... A GUN! AND SINCE THESE GUARDS CARRY ATOMIC HAND-BLASTERS, THIS ONE HAS WHAT I WANT! LET'S TEST THIS CURRENT STYLE!

I'LL CLEAR THIS SECTION... FIND A FORGE AND TURN OUT AS MANY OF THESE HELMETS AS I CAN!
BENTON FINDS AN ANCIENT BLACKSMITH'S FORGE AND GOES TO WORK...
I'LL HAND THESE OUT TO THE EARTHMEN AND OTHERS WHO ARE SLAVES OF THE GREAT BRAIN!

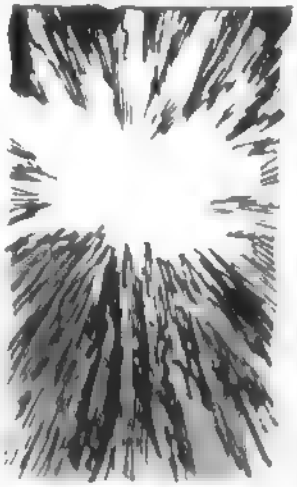
FREE OF THE BRAIN'S HYPNOTIC CONTROL, BENTON CAN MOVE FREELY THROUGH THE MAZE OF SHIPS...
TRY CHEWING ON AN ATOM BLAST!

YOU'RE ALL WITH ME? WE HIT AT THE CENTER OF THIS PLACE! WHERE THE GREAT BRAIN IS!
ALL OF US ARE WITH YOU! GET THE BRAIN--AND OUR TROUBLES ARE OVER!

AT A RUN, BENTON LEADS THE SLAVES OF THE BRAIN THROUGH THE SEA OF SHIPS...
KEEP GOING! WE MUST MAKE IT NOW OR NEVER!

THE LAST OF THEM-- COME ON! THE WAY IS CLEAR!

OVER A HEAP OF DEAD MONSTEROIDS, BENTON FACES THE GREAT BRAIN...
WHEN YOU DIE, THE MONSTERS WILL BE HELPLESS! SINCE THEIR BIRTH, YOU HAVE DONE ALL THEIR THINKING!


AS THE BEAM OF ATOMIC ENERGY HITS THE BRAIN, ITS SOFT PULPY MASS EXPLODES INTO BLACK SMOKE!

WITH THE BRAIN'S END, THE MONSTERS ARE DEAD! ONE BY ONE, THE KIDNAPPED SHIPS ARE FREED...
NOW, BACK TO EARTH!
I'LL SPACE-RADARGRAPH MY STORY! MAYBE BY THE TIME WE LAND, THEY'LL HAVE THE SPACE-HERO MEDAL FOR YOU!
THE END

ONE MORE STEP AND I'LL EXPLODE ALL THE AIR ON THE MOON! DEATH FOR US ALL!

SINCE MAN FIRST SCOOPED UP ROCKS ON THE MOON, IT HAS BEEN MANKIND'S DREAM TO COLONIZE THAT LONELY SATELLITE. WHEN WE DO, VALUES WILL CHANGE. THE FOLLOWING IS A BLOODY TALE OF POWER THROUGH TERROR WHEREIN AIR, THAT USED TO BE FREE, WILL BE MORE VALUABLE THAN GOLD!

SHE'S DESPERATE ENOUGH-- SHE'LL DO IT!

LUA! LUA DEAR!

THE MOON IS RED

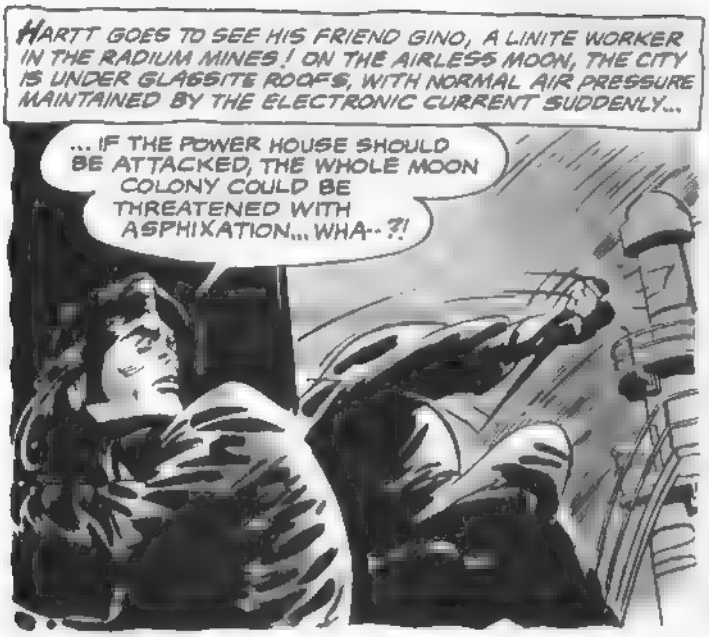
THE PEOPLE ARE SMOULDERING WITH REBELLION! PLOTTERS ARE AT WORK, TO OVERTHROW OUR GOVERNMENT!

NONESENSE, HARTT! YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING THINGS! JUST A FEW LUNITES ARE DISSATISFIED!

REBELLION! IS THREATENING THE LITTLE LUNITE RACE-- ALL ARE DESCENDENTS OF THE ORIGINAL EARTH COLONISTS ARE A DOCILE, KINDLY PEOPLE! BUT LATELY ANIMOSITY TOWARD GOVERNOR BLAK IS OBVIOUS...

SOMEONE IS STIRRING UP THE TROUBLE, GOVERNOR BLAK!

NONESENSE, MY BOY!


HARTT GOES TO SEE HIS FRIEND GINO, A LINITE WORKER IN THE RADIUM MINES! ON THE AIRLESS MOON, THE CITY IS UNDER GLASSITE ROOFS, WITH NORMAL AIR PRESSURE MAINTAINED BY THE ELECTRONIC CURRENT SUDDENLY...
... IF THE POWER HOUSE SHOULD BE ATTACKED, THE WHOLE MOON COLONY COULD BE THREATENED WITH ASPHIXATION... WHA--?!

AND THEN...

THE ASSAILANT IS CLOAKED WITH ELECTRONIZED INVISIBILITY...
NO YOU DON'T!

GOT YOU, YOU MURDEROUS VILLAIN!
OOF!

THE ELECTRONIC MECHANISM IS WRECKED! AND HARTT SEES...
A MARTIAN!

THAT EVENING, HARTT HAS SUPPER WITH GINO, AND HIS YOUNG WIFE LUA!
IT WAS A MARTIAN WHO TRIED TO MURDER ME!
MARTIANS ARE SENT HERE TO CAUSE TROUBLE! THEY TELL THE PEOPLE WE SHOULD BE INDEPENDENT, AND SET UP OUR OWN GOVERNMENT!

IT WOULD ONLY BE A PUPPET GOVERNMENT, OF COURSE! THEY WOULD USE IT AS A BASE FROM WHICH TO ATTACK THE UNIVERSE!
YOU WANT TO SAY SOMETHING, JARA?
I HAVE HEARD OF THE PLOT! MARTIANS CAUSE THE TROUBLE! I HAVE SEEN THEM WHISPERING-- PLANNING!

THERE'S A CROWD OUTSIDE!
HE'S IN THERE! GET HIM OUT! KILL HIM!
AFTER ME! BECAUSE I REPRESENT THE EARTH GOVERNMENT! OPEN THE DOOR, GINO! I'LL GO OUT AND TALK TO THEM!

BE QUIET! YOU HAVE NO QUARREL WITH EARTH! YOU ARE THE DUPES OF THE MARTIAN PLOT!
THERE HE IS!... YAH...

AND SUDDENLY, FROM THE BACK FRINGE OF THE CROWD...
GET HIM, NOW!
BLAM!

JAC! COME INSIDE! THEY'LL KILL YOU!
HERE COME THE POLICE!

AND AT A DISTANT STREET CORNER...
THE TIME HAS COME! OUR CHANCE IS NOW-- TONIGHT!
GINO, LOOK! I KNOW THAT FELLOW-- SET MALO, A MARTIAN RENEGADE! HE'S THE LEADER OF THIS!

LATER THAT NIGHT!
THERE'S A CELLAR NEAR HERE! OUR SERVANT, JARA, SAYS SHE THINKS THE PLOTTERS HAVE BEEN MEETING HERE!

AND PRESENTLY...
THERE THEY ARE!
ALREADY THEY HAVE LEFT FOR THE POWER HOUSE!
THAT MALO IS SMART! IN AN HOUR WE WILL RULE THE MOON!
SHH! LISTEN!

THEY'VE GONE UP THE MOUNTAIN TO THE POWER HOUSE!
WE'LL CALL AND WARN GRANTLINE AT ONCE!

...CAN'T DO, THE AUDIO-CIRCUIT IS BROKEN! ALL COMMUNICATIONS ARE WRECKED!
WE--WE CAN'T NOTIFY ANYONE!

IN A NEARBY PRESSURE-PORTE, GIVING ACCESS TO THE BLEAK AIRLESS MOON SURFACE...
WE'LL HAVE TO CLIMB UP TO THE POWER HOUSE AND WARN GRANTLINE!

WITH THE CORRIDOR-PANEL CLOSED, HARTT OPENS THE OUTER PANEL! WITH A SURGING ROAR, THE AIR IN THE LITTLE PORTE RUSHES OUT!
FFFZZZ

UNDER THE CITY ROOF, GRAVITY NORMAL TO EARTH IS MAINTAINED! BUT OUT HERE ON THE MOON SURFACE, GRAVITY IS ONLY ONE-FIFTH OF NORMAL! WITH HUGE, 30 FOOT SAILING LEAPS, HARTT AND GINO START THEIR LONG CLIMB!
KEEP ALERT, GINO! MALO'S MEN MAY BE ANYWHERE AROUND HERE!

THE POWER HOUSE SITS ON A CLIFF OF ARCHIMEDES MOUNTAINS! AND AS HARTT AND GINO APPROACH...
LOOK! THERE'S ONE OF GRANT-LINE'S GUARDS!
MAYBE IT ISN'T! WATCH YOURSELF, GINO!

BRIEF, WEIRD COMBAT! AND AS HARTT'S KNIFE-BLADE STRIFES...
GOT YOU!
UGH!
FSSSSS

WITH HIS AIR GONE, HE'S ASPHYXIATED! A MARTIAN!
MALO MUST HAVE ALREADY CAPTURED THE POWER HOUSE!

AND A MOMENT LATER...
LOOK, THERE'S ONE OF THE PRESSURE ENTRANCES! WE'LL TRY AND GET INSIDE!

IN THE LITTLE ENTRANCE...
YOU CAN SEE INSIDE? WHAT IS IT?
GINO! LOOK HERE! QUIET!

SO YOU CAME UP HERE TO HELP ME, BECAUSE YOU HATE EARTHMEN! IS THAT WHAT YOU SAY, BOY?
Y-YES SIR!
JAC! THAT-- THAT'S MY WIFE, LUA!

FROM HER SERVANT, JARA, LUA HAD LEARNED OF MALO'S PLOT TO CAPTURE THE POWER HOUSE! SHE HAD TRIED TO LOCATE GINO AND HARTT, BUT COULD NOT! THEN WITH HER OWN DESPERATE PLAN, SHE DISGUISED HERSELF AS A MINE-WORKER, AND ARRIVED...

YOU WORK HARD IN THE MARE IMBRIUM RADIUM MINES?

YES SIR! AND THE EARTHMAN OVERSEER-- I HATE HIM! I WILL TELL MY PEOPLE THAT YOU ARE THEIR BEST RULER!

BUT LUA'S DISGUISE IS NOT AS GOOD AS SHE THINKS! SUDDENLY MALO REACHES...

A GIRL! A VERY PRETTY GIRL! BY THE STARWAYS, WHAT LUCK FOR ME!

OHHH!

AND AT THE ENTRANCE, THE DESPERATE GINO AND HARTT OPEN THE SLIDE...

GIVE ME A KISS, AND THEN WE'LL TALK ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP ME! IN AN HOUR GOVERNOR BLAK WILL HAVE TO SURRENDER! IF HE DOESN'T, I'LL OPEN THE CITY VALVES AND LET OUT ITS AIR! HE AND EVERYONE ELSE DOWN THERE WILL SUFFOCATE!

LUA! LUA!

DESPERATELY HARTT AND GINO BATTLE THE VILLAINOUS MARTIANS, BUT THE ODDS ARE TOO GREAT!

HO! WHAT HAVE WE HERE? MORE VISITORS! DON'T KILL THEM, ROK! TIE THEM UP-- I WANT TO TALK TO THEM!

SO IT'S THE GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY! I GUESS YOU KNOW THIS GIRL AND WHAT SHE'S DOING HERE? SUPPOSE YOU TELL--

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I'M DOING HERE!

LUA'S DESPERATE PLAN! SUDDENLY SHE LEAPS FOR THE MAIN AIR-SWITCH OF THE BIG CONTROL BOARD!

NOW YOU'LL DO WHAT I TELL YOU OR I'LL PULL THIS SWITCH! WITH ALL THE AIR GONE, WE'LL ALL DIE, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT...

UNTIE THOSE PRISONERS! I'LL GIVE YOU TEN SECONDS OR WE DIE!
ROK! DO AS SHE SAYS!

ALL RIGHT! NOW, ALL OF YOU, GET OVER AGAINST THE WALL! GINO-- JAC-- TIE THEM UP! WATCH THEM!
THAT LITTLE FOOL! SHE'D DO IT, TOO!
SHE SURE WOULD, MALO! TAKE NO CHANCES!

AND WHEN IT WAS OVER, WITH THE VILLIANS SECURELY ROPED...
WE'VE GOT THEM, LUA! DARLING, YOU WERE MAGNIFICENT!
W-WAS I? OHH...
POOR KID, SHE'S FAINTED!

A YEAR HAS PASSED! THE LITTLE LUNITE COLONY WANTED ITS INDEPENDENCE, AND CONGRESS HAS GRANTED IT! IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE, GINO PREPARES TO TAKE THE OATH OF OFFICE!

AS FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MOON, I DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR...

A NATION IS BORN! AND I PAY HOMAGE TO THE FIRST LADY OF THE MOON!
OH THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

THE END

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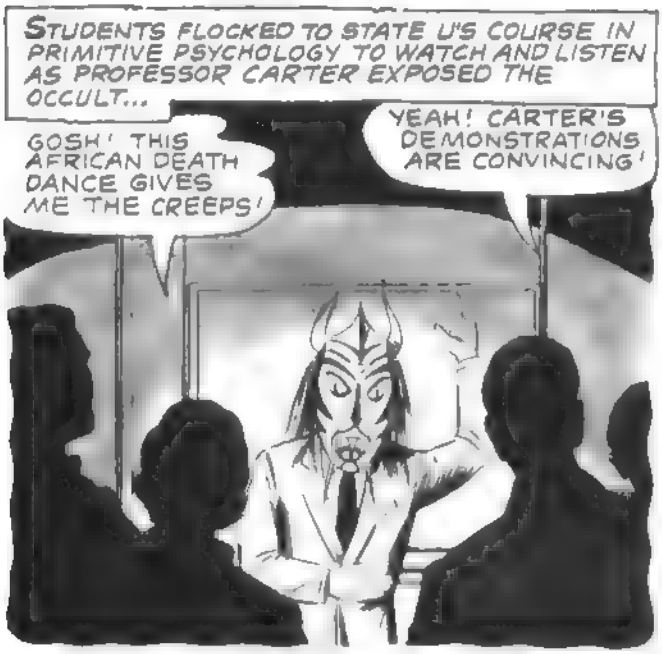
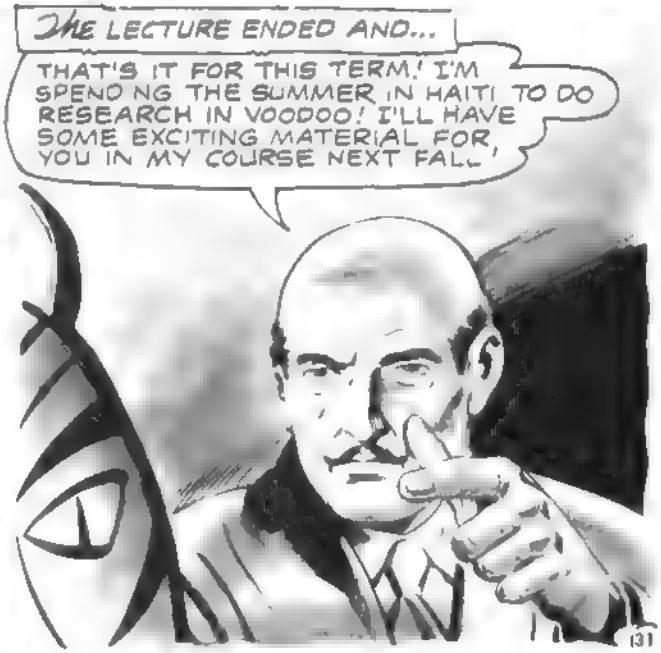
VOODOO DOLL


STUDENTS FLOCKED TO STATE U'S COURSE IN PRIMITIVE PSYCHOLOGY TO WATCH AND LISTEN AS PROFESSOR CARTER EXPOSED THE OCCULT...
GOSH! THIS AFRICAN DEATH DANCE GIVES ME THE CREEPS!
YEAH! CARTER'S DEMONSTRATIONS ARE CONVINCING!


THE LECTURE ENDED AND...
THAT'S IT FOR THIS TERM! I'M SPENDING THE SUMMER IN HAITI TO DO RESEARCH IN VOODOO! I'LL HAVE SOME EXCITING MATERIAL FOR YOU IN MY COURSE NEXT FALL!

THE NEXT MONTH FOUND CARTER PRYING INTO THE ANCIENT WORSHIP OF DAMBALLAH...
THIS IS TOURIST STUFF, FRANCOIS! TAKE ME TO THE HIGH PRIEST!
THE PAPALO? HE DEAD PAPALO N'GAMBO BURIED! N'GAMBO'S SECRETS IN GRAVE WITH HIM!

BURIED WITH HIM, EH? THIS IS A LUCKY BREAK! FRANCOIS, I MUST SEE THAT GRAVE!
NO! NOT SAFE! STRONG VOODOO GUARDS N'GAMBO'S GRAVE! SPIRITS BE ANGRY!

CARTER FINALLY PERSUADED THE GUIDE TO LEAD HIM TO THE SACRED GRAVE...
DO NOT DIG, MASTER CARTER! VOODOO GODS WILL HARM US!
VOODOO GODS! WHAT FANTASTIC RUBBISH! I MUST SEE WHAT IS IN THIS GRAVE!

WHILE THE TERRIFIED HAITIAN WATCHED, CARTER UNCOVERED THE REMAINS OF THE VOODOO HOUNGAN...
WHAT'S THIS? A CLAY DOLL!
IT IS DOLL OF N'GAMBO! DO NOT TOUCH!

THOUGHT THESE DOLLS WERE USED TO HURT PEOPLE! STICK PINS IN THEM TO KILL YOUR ENEMY!
YES, BUT DOLL MUST BE BURIED WITH BODY! ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS TO DOLL HAPPENS TO BODY!

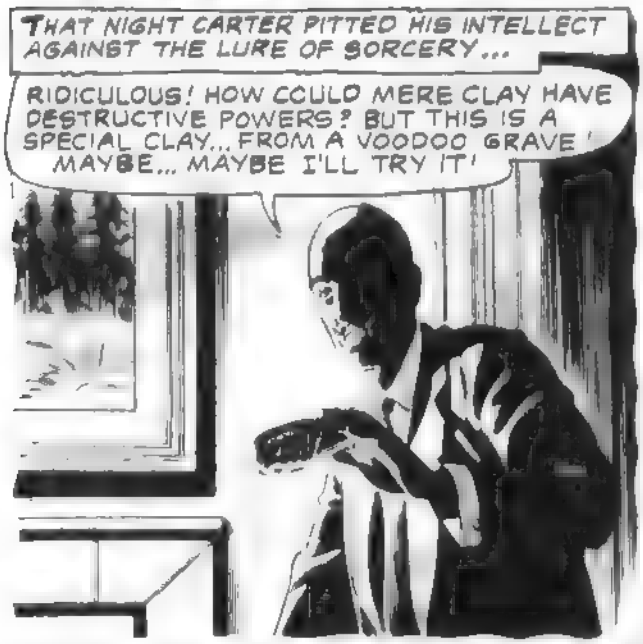
I'LL LEAVE THE DOLL IN THE GRAVE! HEY! THIS BALL OF CLAY UNDER HIS HEAD! SAME STUFF HIS DOLLS MADE OF!
CLAY! HOLD EVIL VOODOO!

JUST WHAT I WANT!

WHEN COLLEGE REOPENED, PROFESSOR CARTER AGAIN HELD HIS CLASS SPELL-BOUND...
I TOOK THIS CLAY FROM THE GRAVE OF A HIGH PRIEST! THE NATIVES BELIEVE IT HOLDS STRANGE POWERS! SO, WHEN A WITCH DOCTOR MAKES A DOLL... LIKE THIS...
...AND THE VICTIM BELIEVES IT REPRESENTS HIM... THEN HE WILL SUFFER ANY INJURY DONE TO THE DOLL! HMMM! THIS LOOKS A BIT LIKE MY FELLOW PSYCHOLOGIST, DR. JOHNSON!
HA! HA!
DON'T LAUGH! THESE CHARMS ARE EFFECTIVE WHEN THE VICTIM BELIEVES IN THEM... IT'S PURE AUTOSUGGESTION!
...BUT, CAN I, WITH A HANDFUL OF ORDINARY CLAY, DO DAMAGE TO A MAN WHO DOESN'T BELIEVE IN VOODOO? NO, OF COURSE NOT! HERE, I'LL BREAK THE DOLL'S LEG...
AND AT THAT SAME MOMENT...
LOOK OUT, DR. JOHNSON!
...MUMBLE A LITTLE GIBBERISH TO IMPRESS THE IGNORANT SAVAGE, AND THE SPELL IS CAST!
AAAGGH!
IT'S DR. JOHNSON! HE FELL DOWN THE LIBRARY STEPS!
HIS LEG'S ALL TWISTED! IT--IT'S BROKEN... LIKE... LIKE THE VOODOO DOLL!

Then...
IT WORKED! THE DOLL DID IT, PROFESSOR CARTER! YOU...
THIS IS COINCIDENCE! YOU'RE LETTING SUPERSTITION REPLACE LOGIC! CLASS DISMISSED!

BUT AS CARTER STARED DOWN AT THE BROKEN DOLL IN HIS HAND... A TREMOR OF DOUBT CREPT OUT OF SOME DEEP RECESS OF HIS MIND...
I WONDER? NO! IT'S TOO FANTASTIC! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! BUT...


THAT NIGHT CARTER PITTED HIS INTELLECT AGAINST THE LURE OF SORCERY...
RIDICULOUS! HOW COULD MERE CLAY HAVE DESTRUCTIVE POWERS? BUT THIS IS A SPECIAL CLAY... FROM A VOODOO GRAVE! MAYBE... MAYBE I'LL TRY IT!

As IF POSSESSED, HE SEIZED A HANDFUL OF THE CLAY AND BEGAN TO FASHION...
I'LL TRY IT ON PROFESSOR CASTLE! IF IT WORKS... I'LL BE HEAD OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT! THAT OLD DUFFER'S BEEN IN MY WAY LONG ENOUGH!

And THEN, LIKE AN ANCIENT SAVAGE, HE THREW HIMSELF INTO THE DEATH RITUAL!
O. GOUN BARI I BABA SOBO UN HOUN MANYAN...

At LAST THE FRENZIED ORGY REACHED ITS BLOOD-CHILLING CLIMAX...

CARTER HAD REGAINED HIS COMPOSURE AND THE NEXT MORNING WITH HIS FAMILY...

MRS. BENTON JUST CALLED, RALPH! LAST NIGHT PROFESSOR CASTLE'S HOUSE BURNED DOWN WITH HIM IN IT! NO ONE KNOWS WHAT CAUSED THE FIRE!

CASTLE'S DEAD! FROM UNKNOWN CAUSES!

CARTER WAS EXULTANT! EVEN BEFORE HE WAS CALLED TO THE DEAN'S OFFICE, HE KNEW THAT FROM NOW ON HE WAS SHAPING HIS DESTINY...

TRAGIC THING ABOUT CASTLE! LEAVES US WITHOUT A HEAD FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT! BUT I THINK YOU CAN FILL THE POST, CARTER!

THANK YOU, SIR!

THAT EVENING, CARTER TOLD HIS WIFE THE NEWS...

THAT'S WONDERFUL, RALPH! YOU'VE WORKED HARD FOR THIS, AND WAITED A LONG TIME!

DADDY! CAN I HAVE SOMETHING?

OF COURSE, SON! NOTHING'S TOO GOOD FOR THE SON OF A DEPARTMENT HEAD! WHAT'S YOUR PLEASURE?

LEMME CUT OFF A LITTLE BIT OF YOUR HAIR!

OF COURSE! BUT WHAT'S IT FOR? YOU'RE A LITTLE YOUNG TO BE PRACTICING THE BLACK ARTS!

JUST PLAYING!

And THE BOY RETURNED TO HIS INNOCENT GAME...

AND PUT DADDY'S HAIR ON TOP AND ON HERE AND...

...AND HIS TOY WAS A PLAYTHING OF BLACK MAGIC...

I FEEL STRANGE! AS IF A GIANT HAND WERE SQUEEZING ME! I'M ALL HOT AND...
TODAY'S BEEN AN AWFUL STRAIN ON YOU, DEAR! OH, MY! IT'S JUNIOR'S BEDTIME!

JUNIOR! COME UP TO BED!
YES, MOMMY! ...I'LL HIDE MY DOLLY...

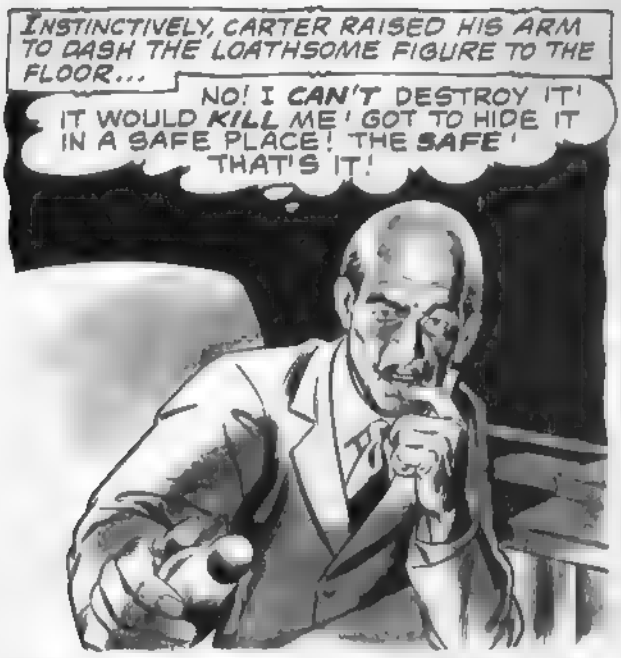
...UNDER HERE!

LIKE A TERRIBLE WEIGHT ON ME! BETTER GET MY PILLS... IN DESK DRAWER!

THE CLAY! WHO'S BEEN...? JUNIOR! HE'S BEEN PLAYING WITH IT!

CARTER'S SHAKING HAND BRUSHED A BOOK OFF THE DESK AND...
THE WEIGHT'S GONE... FROM MY CHEST! THAT BOOK! IT WAS CRUSHING THIS CLAY DOLL!

THAT'S WHAT HE WANTED MY HAIR FOR...HE MADE A DOLL... OF ME!

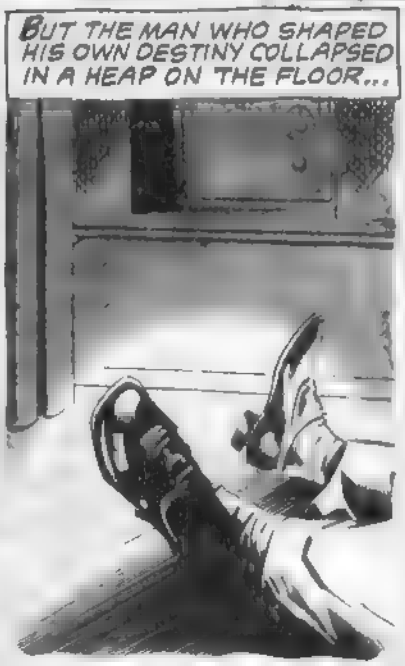

INSTINCTIVELY, CARTER RAISED HIS ARM TO DASH THE LOATHSOME FIGURE TO THE FLOOR...
NO! I CAN'T DESTROY IT! IT WOULD KILL ME! GOT TO HIDE IT IN A SAFE PLACE! THE SAFE! THAT'S IT!

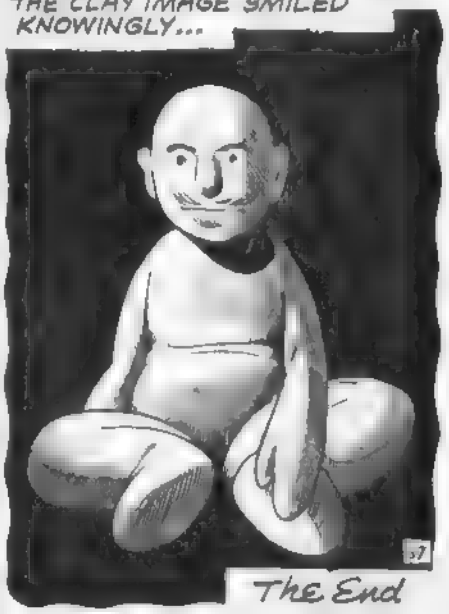
QUICKLY, CARTER PUT THE DOLL INTO THE WALL SAFE AND SLAMMED THE DOOR...
WHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE! THE CLAY! IT'S DANGEROUS TO HAVE AROUND! I'LL BURY IT!

IN THE GARDEN, CARTER BURIED THE REMAINDER OF THE VOODOO CLAY...
THERE! DONE! GUESS I'M NOT USED TO HARD WORK! BREATHING TOO HARD! HAVE TO GET THE DOLL OUT OF THE SAFE AND GET RID OF IT!

SUDDENLY HIS LUNGS BEGAN TO CONSTRICT AND HE GASPED...
AIR! GOT TO HAVE AIR!

SUDDEN REALIZATION HIT CARTER...
CAN'T BREATHE! DOLL HASN'T GOT ANY AIR! I'LL SUFFOCATE! GOTTA OPEN THE...


BUT THE MAN WHO SHAPED HIS OWN DESTINY COLLAPSED IN A HEAP ON THE FLOOR...


...WHILE IN THE AIR-TIGHT SAFE, THE CLAY IMAGE SMILED KNOWINGLY...
The End

HEH...HEH.. HEH...WELCOME TO THE HAUNT OF HORROR! I'VE GOT A JUICY MORSEL FOR YOUR VAMPIRE-LIKE APPETITES! PUT YOUR DROOL BIBS ON AND READ THIS TALE I CALL...
FLAMING GHOST
I-I LOVED YOU, LENORE... BUT YOU CHEATED ON ME! NOW YOU DIE FOR IT!!!
JOHN PEIRSON IS THE OWNER OF A LARGE CREMATORIUM IN HOLLYWOOD... AND HIS "CUSTOMERS" ARE ALWAYS WEALTHY...
THIS FRANCOIS DUNLAP WAS A BILLIONAIRE! BUT WHEN THEY'RE DEAD, THEY ALL LOOK ALIKE!
BURN HIM, MAC!
YES, THE CREMATORIUM DOES A GOOD BUSINESS! A BURNING COSTS $5,000!
HERE YA GO, FRANCIOS, OLD BOY! HAPPY LANDINGS!

HEH...HEH...BURN! SOON YOU'LL BE ONLY ASHES...

BUT LET'S TURN TO MORE PLEASANT THINGS... NOT ONLY DOES JOHN PEIRSON OWN A CREMATORIUM... HE ALSO HAS A BEAUTIFUL WIFE...
HURRY, DARLING... WE'RE DUE AT THE CARLTONS IN TEN MINUTES!
WE'LL HAVE TO BE LATE, MY DEAR! I HAVE A STOP TO MAKE!

GENORE PEIRSON IS THE APPLE OF HER HUSBAND'S EYE! SHE'S AN EX-HOLLYWOOD BIT PLAYER TWENTY YEARS YOUNGER THAN JOHN...
WHERE DO WE HAVE TO STOP, HONEY?
IT'S A SECRET, MY PET!

LENORE SMILES... "A SECRET" ALWAYS MEANS A PRESENT FOR HER...
JOHN IS SO SWEET AND SO THOUGHTFUL! I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD DO WITHOUT HIM!

LATER...
JUST REMEMBER, LENORE... YOU'RE MINE! IF-IF YOU EVER LEAVE ME, I'D... I'D...
DON'T TALK THAT WAY! I LOVE YOU AND I'LL NEVER LEAVE YOU!

OH, YES, THE PEIRSONS ARE A DEVOTED COUPLE... HEH... HEH... BUT JOHN LIVES IN DEADLY FEAR...
I-IF I REALLY BELIEVED SHE MARRIED ME FOR MY MONEY... I THINK I'D KILL HER!

CHARMING COUPLE, EH? A WEEK LATER...
... AND (SOB) WE WANT THE BEST OF EVERYTHING, MR PEIRSON... AFTER ALL LOLA LAVERNE WAS THE TOAST OF HOLLYWOOD!
MRS BERNE, IT WILL BE A BEAUTIFUL CEREMONY!

NOW YOU'D BETTER SELECT A COFFIN FOR MISS LAVERNE!
I-I'D LIKE TO SEE MR. PEIRSON A-ABOUT A FUNERAL!
PLEASE HAVE A SEAT! MR PE RSON WILL BE WITH YOU IN A MINUTE!
AS LENORE LOOKS AT RALPH LANG, SHE FEELS A WAVE OF SYMPATHY... HE LOOKS MISERABLE SO ALONE...
I-I HOPE IT WASN'T ANY-ONE CLOSE TO YOU THAT.. ER..
IT WAS MY MOTHER'A HEART ATTACK!

A FEW MINUTES LATER, RALPH IS TALKING TO JOHN...
A HUNDRED DOLLARS? YOUNG MAN, YOU'RE IN THE WRONG PLACE! I CAN'T CONDUCT A FUNERAL FOR THAT PRICE...
JOHN, CAN'T YOU MAKE AN EXCEPTION? IT'S HIS MOTHER! PLEASE, JOHN!

A FLICKER OF JEALOUSY CROSSES JOHN'S EYES, BUT THEN...
DON'T BE RIDICU... OH, ALL RIGHT, MY DEAR I'LL DO AS YOU ASK! YOU MAY HAVE THE FUNERAL AT THAT PRICE, YOUNG MAN!

A FEW DAYS LATER, JOHN TRIED TO PUSH THE THOUGHT OF RALPH LANG OUT OF HIS MIND. BUT...HE HASN'T BEEN TOO SUCCESSFUL!
SHE SEEMED SO FRIENDLY TOWARD HIM! I-I WONDER IF... GOT TO STOP THINK.NG ABOUT IT! IT'S OUR ANNIVERSARY TONIGHT! MAYBE I'LL GET HER SOMETHING...

BUT AS HE LOOKS UP INTO THE WINDOW, JOHN SEES A SIGHT THAT MAKES HIS BLOOD RUN COLD...
LENORE!...AND SHE'S WITH HIM!

JOHN IS WILD WITH RAGE AND JEALOUSY, BUT FOR THE TIME BEING HE KEEPS QUIET ABOUT WHAT HE SAW THAT NIGHT...

STOP LOOKING LIKE A THUNDER CLOUD, DARLING... IT'S OUR ANNIVERSARY!

LENORE HANDS JOHN A PACKAGE, AND WHEN HE OPENS IT, HE FINDS...
"...TO MY DEAREST HUSBAND WITH ALL MY LOVE, LENORE." THANK YOU, MY DEAR! IT'S VERY CHARMING!

YOU SEEM DEPRESSED, JOHN!
WHY IS SHE ACTING SO SWEET? PROBABLY TRYING TO HIDE SOMETHING!

AS THE DAYS PASS, JOHN IS LIKE A MAN POSESSED... IS LENORE REALLY BEING UNFAITHFUL???
I DON'T SEE ANY LETTERS FROM HIM... MAYBE I'M ALL WRONG... MAYBE SHE... WAIT A MINUTE... WHAT'S THIS? HER CHECK BOOK!

...AND A CHECK TO RALPH FOR $400! THAT LITTLE TWO-TIMER! I WAS RIGHT!!

JOHN PACES AROUND LENORE'S ROOM LIKE A MADMAN... AND... AS IF TO PROVE HIS SUSPICIONS WHEN HE PEERS OUT OF THE WINDOW...
SHE'S WITH HIM--PROBABLY THINKS I'M AT THE CREMATORIUM... OH, LENORE... YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS... PAY WITH YOUR LIFE!

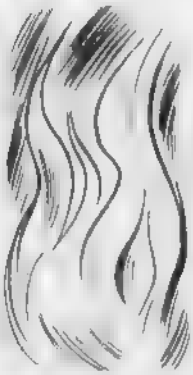
HEH... HEH... HEH! JOHN'S LOVE IS RAPIDLY TURNING INTO A BURNING, RAGING HATRED!
SO... YOU FEEL HAPPY NOW, DO YOU, MY CHARMING WIFE? WELL, MY DEAR... TONIGHT YOU'LL NOT BE FEELING ANYTHING!

IT IS NIGHT! AFTER A QUIET DINNER WITH HER HUSBAND, LENORE HAS RETIRED TO HER ROOM AND GONE TO BED...

SUDDENLY...
WAKE UP, MY SWEET... WAKE UP, IT'S TIME!

JOHN, FOR GOD'S SAKE...WHAT'S THE MATTER... ARE YOU DRUNK...
DRUNK? HA! HA! HA! NO, LENORE, I'M NOT DRUNK! I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I'M DOING...

LENORE'S STRUGGLES AND SCREAMS ARE IN VAIN...
JOHN, STOP IT! YOU'VE LOST YOUR MIND! LET ME GO!
NO, MY DEAR... YOU MUST HAVE LOST YOUR MIND TO THINK YOU FOOLED ME!


IN THE DARK OF NIGHT, JOHN HAS TAKEN LENORE TO THE CREMATORIUM WITHOUT BEING OBSERVED...

I CAN SEE BY YOUR EYES THAT YOU'RE PLEADING WITH ME...BUT IT'S TOO LATE, MY DEAR!

WITH LENORE TIED INSIDE A COFFIN, JOHN IS READY TO COMPLETE THE LAST STEP OF HIS TERRIBLE REVENGE...
YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD GET AWAY WITH IT... YOU AND RALPH LANG...BUT YOU WERE WRONG, MY PET... VERY WRONG!

NOW YOU'LL BURN FOR YOUR SINS!

JOHN WATCHES FROM A WINDOW AS THE FLAMES CONSUME HIS WIFE!

H-HOW COULD YOU HAVE DONE IT TO ME, LENORE? I LOVED YOU SO... AND ALL YOU WANTED WAS MY MONEY!

NOW... THE BODY OF LENORE PEIRSON IS NOTHING BUT ASHES! ASHES WHICH JOHN PLACES IN AN URN...

NOW YOU'RE **MINE** AGAIN, LENORE... YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE ME... **NEVER!**

THE URN IS PLACED ON A SHELF IN JOHN'S SITTING ROOM!

SEE, MY SWEET... NOW YOU'RE BACK HOME... ISN'T IT PEACEFUL... JUST YOU AND ME, TOGETHER!

JOHN TELLS EVERYONE THAT LENORE HAS GONE ON AN EXTENDED VACATION AND FOR A TIME HE IS CONTENTED...

GOOD MORNING, LENORE DEAR... I'M AFRAID I'VE GOT A BUSY DAY AHEAD! I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE YOU UNTIL TONIGHT! TRY NOT TO BE TOO LONESOME WHILE I'M GONE!

JOHN LEAVES... THE ROOM IS SILENT EXCEPT FOR A SLIGHT STIRRING WITHIN THE URN...

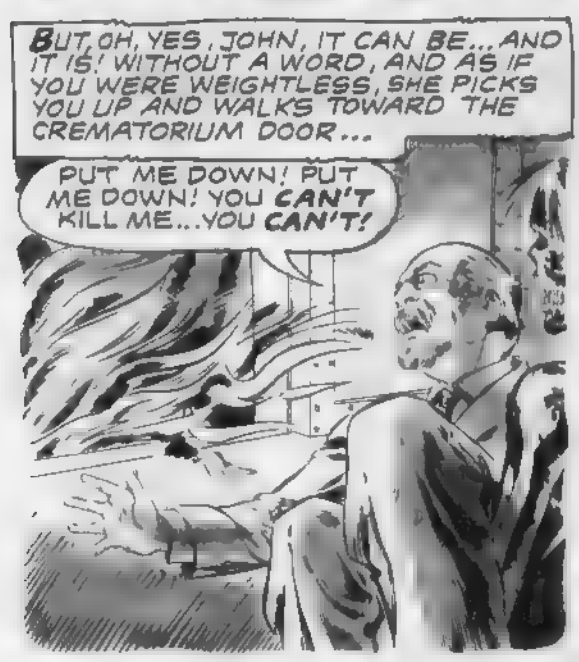
HEH... HEH... HEH... YES, THERE'S DEFINITELY MOVEMENT WITHIN THE URN...

...AND AN AGONIZING FEW MINUTES LATER...

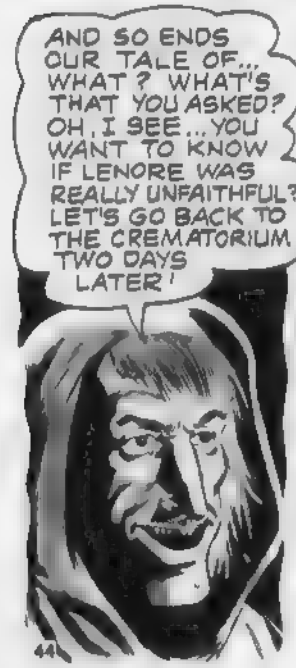
HEH... HEH... HEH... EACH STEP IS TORTURE, BUT THE ROTTING, BURNED CREATURE MAKES ITS WAY PAINFULLY ACROSS TOWN UNTIL IT REACHES ITS DESTINATION...
PEIRS
CREMAT

AND A FEW MINUTES LATER...
NO MORE BUSINESS TODAY... GUESS I'LL TURN DOWN THE FURNACE'S HEAT AND...

OH, MY GOD! NO! NO! I-IT CAN'T BE...


BUT, OH, YES, JOHN, IT CAN BE... AND IT IS! WITHOUT A WORD, AND AS IF YOU WERE WEIGHTLESS, SHE PICKS YOU UP AND WALKS TOWARD THE CREMATORIUM DOOR...
PUT ME DOWN! PUT ME DOWN! YOU CAN'T KILL ME... YOU CAN'T!

BUT EVEN AS YOU SCREAM, YOU KNOW IT'S USELESS, DON'T YOU, JOHN? OF COURSE SHE CAN KILL YOU... AND SHE DOES!


AND SO ENDS OUR TALE OF... WHAT? WHAT'S THAT YOU ASKED? OH, I SEE... YOU WANT TO KNOW IF LENORE WAS REALLY UNFAITHFUL? LET'S GO BACK TO THE CREMATORIUM TWO DAYS LATER!

OH, YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN MRS. PEIRSON WILL BE BACK? WELL, WOULD YOU HAVE THIS FORWARDED TO HER, PLEASE?

IT'S A CHECK! SHE LOANED ME THE MONEY TO BRING MY WIFE OUT HERE FROM THE EAST! WONDERFUL WOMAN, MRS. PEIRSON -- JUST LIKE A MOTHER TO ME!
THE END

TERROR OF THE DEAD!

D-DON'T COME NEAR ME! NO--NO!

DAILY, EBEN WENT INTO TOWN AND SUFFERED THE MACABRE AND UNKIND JIBES OF THE TOWNSFOLK...

HOW'S BUSINESS, EBEN? SAYS IN THE PAPER THAT THE WORLD IS FACING A GRAVE SITUATION! HAW! HAW!

HEE! HEE! OF CORPSE IT IS, JAKE! SAY, EBEN, YOU LOOK TIRED! MAYBE YOU NEED NEW SPRINGS IN THAT COFFIN YOU SLEEP IN!

EBEN FACED THIS RIDICULE FOR AN UNSUSPECTED REASON! ONCE HE HAD COURTED ANN HALE, BUT SHE MARRIED JOHN FRICK! EBEN'S ONLY LITTLE PLEASURE WAS OCCASIONALLY SEEING ANN...

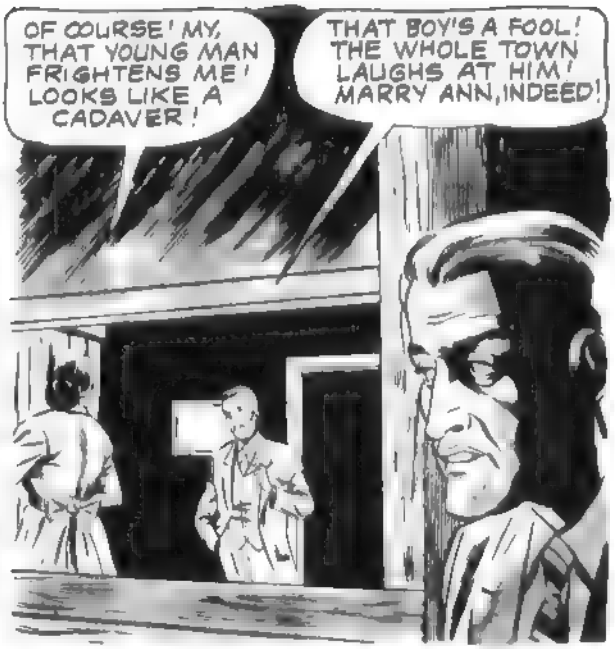
GOOD MORNING, ANN! YOUR PARENTS STILL VISITING WITH YOU?

YES, EBEN, BUT JOHN'S DRIVING THEM TO BOLTON TOMORROW!

U.S POST

ENTRANCE

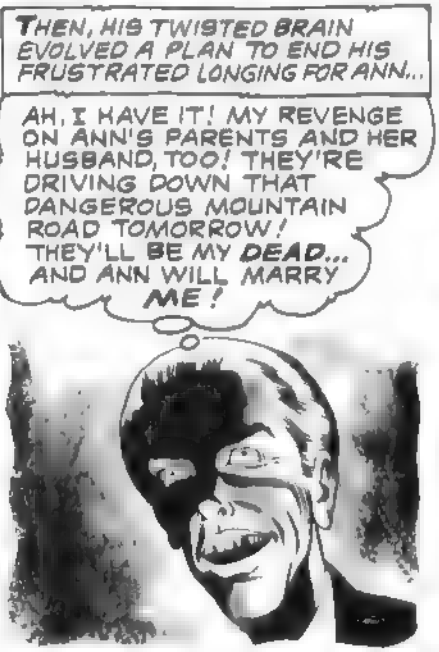
EBEN WRITHED UNDER THE MEMORY OF AN OLD CONVERSATION HE HEARD WHILE PASSING ANN'S HOUSE!
IMAGINE! THAT SCARE-CROW EBAN PROPOSED TO OUR ANN LAST NIGHT!
THAT UGLY, REPULSIVE GRAVEDIGGER? SHE REFUSED, OF COURSE!


OF COURSE! MY, THAT YOUNG MAN FRIGHTENS ME! LOOKS LIKE A CADAVER!
THAT BOY'S A FOOL! THE WHOLE TOWN LAUGHS AT HIM! MARRY ANN, INDEED!

EBEN STILL CHAFED FROM THOSE BITING COMMENTS AS HE ENTERED THE HOUSE BESIDE THE CEMETERY...
FOOL, AM I? LAUGH AT ME? BUT I HAVE THE LAST LAUGH! THIS IS MY DOMAIN AND SOONER OR LATER THEY ALL COME TO ME!

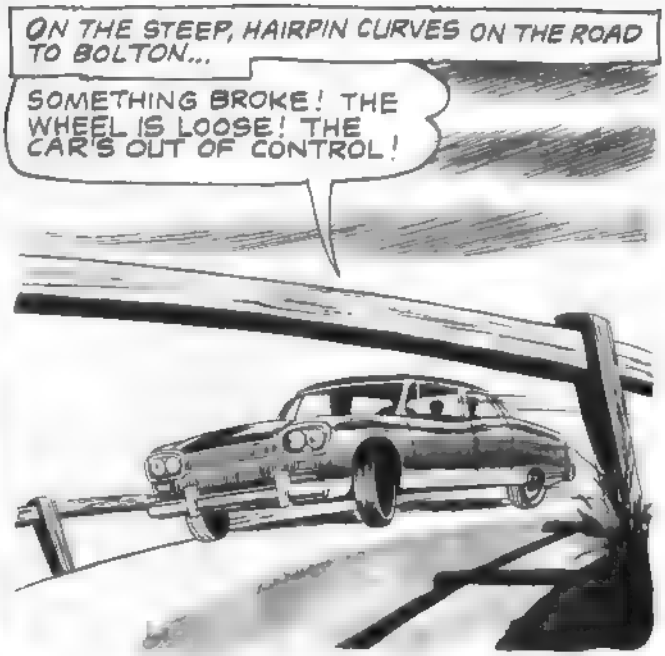
HA! HA! HERE THEY ARE IN MY DEEP-FREEZE DEN! THE PARTS THAT LAUGHED AT OR HURT ME! HA! HA!

EBEN CACKLED FIENDISHLY AS HE WORKED OVER THE CORPSES...
HEH! HEH! GLENN ROBERTS! YOU ALWAYS KICKED AND TRIPPED ME -- BUT YOU'LL GO TO THE GRAVE WITHOUT THOSE DEVILISH FEET!


THEN, HIS TWISTED BRAIN EVOLVED A PLAN TO END HIS FRUSTRATED LONGING FOR ANN...
AH, I HAVE IT! MY REVENGE ON ANN'S PARENTS AND HER HUSBAND, TOO! THEY'RE DRIVING DOWN THAT DANGEROUS MOUNTAIN ROAD TOMORROW! THEY'LL BE MY DEAD... AND ANN WILL MARRY ME!

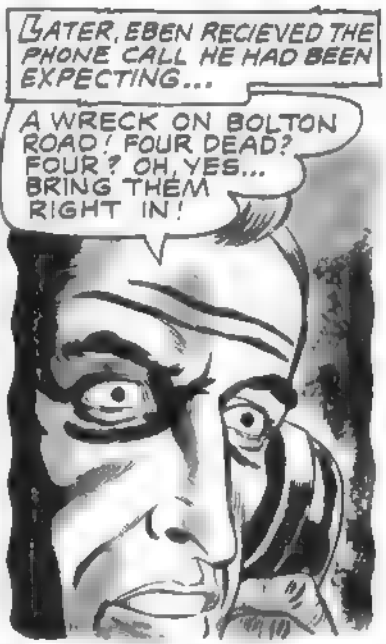
THE DARK OF THAT NIGHT FOUND EBEN IN ANN'S GARAGE...
THAT'LL DO IT! THE STEERING COLUMN IS ALMOST SAWED IN TWO!

BUT THE NEXT DAY...
HOLD ON, JOHN! I WANT TO GO ALONG FOR THE RIDE!
FINE! CLIMB IN!

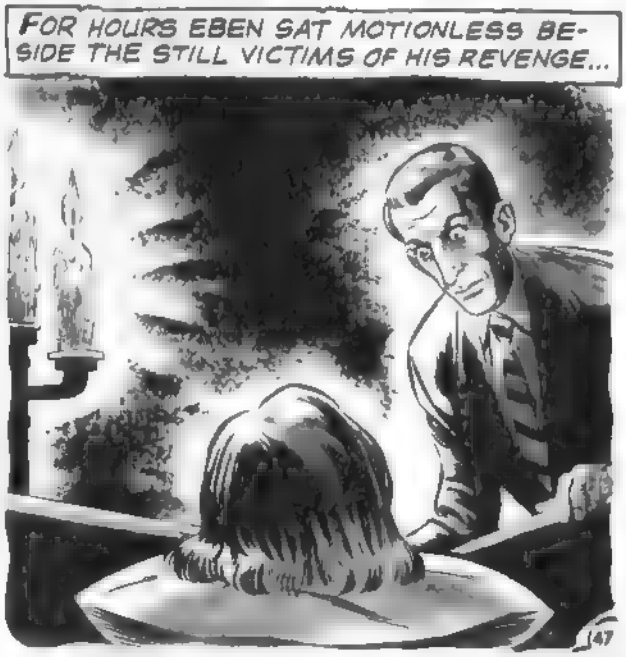

ON THE STEEP, HAIRPIN CURVES ON THE ROAD TO BOLTON...
SOMETHING BROKE! THE WHEEL IS LOOSE! THE CAR'S OUT OF CONTROL!

CRASH

A PASSING MOTORIST SUMMONED HELP...
SHE'S DEAD, TOO! TAKE HER AWAY!
FUNNY, THERE AIN'T ANY MARKS ON HER-- OH, WELL, I GUESS THE DOC KNOWS HIS BUSINESS!


LATER, EBEN RECIEVED THE PHONE CALL HE HAD BEEN EXPECTING...
A WRECK ON BOLTON ROAD! FOUR DEAD? FOUR? OH, YES... BRING THEM RIGHT IN!

EBIN WAITED IN GROWING HORROR UNTIL THE LIMP BURDENS ARRIVED...
OH, NO! NOT HER!
YEAH, IT'S ANN! TOO BAD! YOU WERE KINDA SWEET ON HER ONCE, WEREN'T YOU, EBEN?


FOR HOURS EBEN SAT MOTIONLESS BESIDE THE STILL VICTIMS OF HIS REVENGE...

AT LAST EBEN STIRRED AND STARTED TO TALK...
ANN! I DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL YOU! I ONLY WANTED TO GET RID OF YOUR HUSBAND AND PARENTS! BUT NOW YOU'RE DEAD...DEAD!

EBEN POURED OUT HIS SORDID TALE OF LOVE AND HATE! BUT THEN, ANN MOVED! THE INCOMPETENT DOCTOR HAD FAILED TO DETECT THE FAINT HEARTBEAT!
YOU NEVER LAUGHED AT ME LIKE THE OTHERS DID! I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT YOU! B-BUT NOW I'VE LOST YOU!

A WILD LIGHT FLICKERED IN EBEN'S GRIEF-STRICKEN EYES AS A SUDDEN THOUGHT CAME...
BUT, BUT YOU AREN'T LOST! YOU'RE MINE! ALL MINE! NO ONE WILL KNOW! NO ONE WILL BOTHER US!

HERE, DARLING! HERE'S YOUR NEW HOME! THIS IS YOUR LIVING ROOM! WE'LL HAVE GUESTS, BUT THEY WON'T INTERFERE WITH OUR LIVES! OUR VISITORS WILL BE SILENT... AS THE GRAVE!

...AND HERE IS MY TROPHY ROOM! HERE ARE THE MEMENTOS OF MY ENEMIES! ANN! LOOK AT THEM! HERE IS WHERE EBEN THWAITE METES OUT JUSTICE TO HIS TORMENTORS!

A FAINT WHISPER SUDDENLY STARTLES EBEN...
EBEN! EBEN!
W-WHO IS IT? W-WHO SPEAKS?

...HE WHIRLED AND...
ANN!

EBEN STARED IN DISBELIEF AS ANN APPROACHED HIM...
WHY AM I HERE? OOH! WHAT ARE ALL THESE HORRIBLE THINGS! I-I CAN'T LOOK!
BUT YOU MUST LOOK, ANN! DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE YOUR OLD FRIENDS?

SOMETHING SNAPPED IN EBEN'S WARPED MIND... ALL HE FELT NOW WAS PRIDE IN HIS GRISLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS...
REMEMBER THAT OLD GOSSIP, MISS BISSEL? WELL, HERE'S HER WAGGING TONGUE... AND THIS IS THE MONEY GRABBING HAND OF THAT MISER MR. GRABBLE!

AND CHARLEY WELLS, THE FOOTBALL CAPTAIN DIED REAL YOUNG! USED TO PICK ON ME BECAUSE HE WAS BIG AND STRONG! HERE'S HIS BODY... I'VE SAVED EVERYONE'S CHARMS!

YOU'RE A FIENDISH GHOUL!
YOU--YOU CAN'T TALK TO ME LIKE THAT! YOU'RE DEAD! I KILLED YOU! THE CAR WRECK! I DID THAT! I SAWED THE STEERING POST IN HALF, BUT YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE!!

YOU'RE A MURDERER, TOO! LET ME OUT OF HERE! I'LL TELL EVERYONE WHAT YOU ARE
YOU CAN'T GO! YOU'RE DEAD! YOU BELONG TO ME!

SHE WAS HIS AT LAST AND EBEN WAS DETERMINED NOT TO LOSE HER...
YOU'RE MINE NOW! YOU MUST STAY HERE WITH ME! NO! DON'T SCREAM!
HELP! HELP!

THE CHAIR ROSE AND FELL VIOLENTLY AS EBEN TRIED TO SILENCE HER SCREAMS!

AS EBEN SWUNG OPEN THE DOOR A PUTRID ODOR ENGULFED HIM! HE RECOILED IN HORROR AT THE MACABRE CREATURE THAT CONFRONTED HIM...

CONTINUED ON BACK COVER

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THE STENCH PERMEATED EVERY CORNER OF THE ROOM...
W-WHO... WHAT ARE YOU? THAT'S SAM DELL'S HEAD AND CHARLEY'S BODY!
A HORDE OF MONSTROUS CREATURES FOLLOWED IT, THEIR ROTTING FLESH HANGING FROM WHITENED BONES!
EBEN THWAITE! YOUR TIME HAS COME!
THAT'S OLD LADY BISSEL'S VOICE! YOU'VE GOT HER TONGUE! OH, NO... NO! NO! YOU'RE MADE UP FROM PARTS OF ALL THE BODIES!
IT WAS TOO LATE FOR EBEN TO ESCAPE...
YAAGH-H-H!
THE MUSCULAR BODY OF THE FOOTBALL STAR LIFTED EBEN'S FRAIL BODY AND...
NO! PLEASE!
FLUNG HIM AGAINST THE WALL!
AS DEATH CAME TO EBEN, THE GHASTLY THING SANK TO THE FLOOR IN A HEAP OF FETED, DECOMPOSED FLESH!
JUST BEFORE DAWN, THE EVIL-ODORED MOB OF CORPSES RETURNED TO THEIR CLAMMY GRAVES! THEY REGAINED AT LAST WHAT EBEN HAD TAKEN FROM THEM...
The End